

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR- BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR MONTANA FAMILIES

State Capitol-Room 152
Helena, Montana
Monday, August 20, 2007
Tuesday, August 21, 2007

MINUTES-Approved (10-9-07)

Council Members Present:

Minkie Medora, Chairperson

Lori Brengle

Mary Danford

Everall Fox

Sheila Hogan

Bethany Letiecq

Barb Stiffarm

Elaine Topsky

Angie Wasia

Robert Young

Director Dan Bucks-Revenue

Commissioner Keith Kelly-Labor & Industry

Director Joan Miles-DPHHS

Director Tony Preite-Commerce

Council Members Absent:

Representative Shannon Augare

(Attending on his behalf-Representative Deb Kottel, Julia Brown, and Jake Cummings)

Council Designees and Attendees:

Dick Clark-State CIO DOA

Gail Gallik -Commerce

Marissa Kozel -Commerce

Hank Hudson -DPHHS

Jim Nolan -DPHHS

Dore Schwinden-Labor & Industry

Barb Wagner-Revenue

Pam Bucy-Attorney General's Office

David Ewer- Budget Director

Pat Wise-Office of Economic Development

Anna Whiting Sorrell-Governor's Office

Anne Pichette-Governor's Office

Major Robinson-Governor's Office Coordinator of Indian Affairs

Mary Berg

Representative Mary Caferro

Pamela Carlson

Sherrie Downing

Jayson Harrington

George Haynes, Ph. D.

Lisa Neiman

Diana Pearce, Ph. D.

Barb Perzinski

Olivia Riutta

Vicki Turner

Call to Order/Welcome

The meeting began with introductions of both council members and attendees.

Presentations

Presentations were provided by both Diana Pearce Ph.D. and George Haynes, Ph.D. regarding poverty levels and the self sufficiency study done in January 2002. Federal poverty level is most often used, self-sufficiency standards uses other factors than just the level of poverty.

Pam Bucy, (Attorney General Mike McGrath's Office) provided information on the office of Consumer Protection, including predatory lending practices, the sub-prime mortgage foreclosure crisis, and payday and title loans. She also provided information about identity theft laws; and how to put a freeze one's account.

David Ewer, Budget Director spoke to the council members regarding timelines for action, the budget planning process along with funding areas such as K-12 education, higher education, overcrowded prisons and forest fires.

Discussion

Approval of the June 20th meeting minutes was motioned and seconded.

**Create a Vision*

The Council discussed the meaning of family economic security and ideas for action. Please see the attached draft discussion notes from August 20th.

**Create Priority*

The Council discussed their ideas from the previous day and moved forward with breakout groups to discuss the four "mission" statements and to bring together strategies/action steps. Please see the attached draft discussion notes from August 21st.

Follow-up

Staff will sort through the ideas from the breakout group discussions and email draft notes to Council for comments. Jim Nolan will try to find out costs associated with updating the Self-Sufficiency Standard. Council members will email to Anne their questions relating to agencies and she will send to agencies.

Public Comment

Olivia Riutta spoke about the work she does, the effects of the Deficit Reduction Act and how it affects Montanans. She will bring informational brochures to the next meeting.

Barb Perzinski talked about the work she does operating a FES Program.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held in Helena on October 9th & 10th at the Montana State Capitol Building.

Draft notes from 8-20-07 flip charts

*What does Family Economic Security mean to you?

- Ability to earn it, keep it, grow it
 - Create a buffer for hard times
- Adequate safety net
- Not everybody can be self sufficient
 - Some need it short term
 - Some need it all the time
 - Being 1 paycheck away, 1 health crisis
- Need resources to develop skill base that lead to better wages
- Policy change that leads to learning new skills
 - Allows person to move forward without risks
 - Tax incentives for businesses that improve?
- Have a “hold harmless” clause
 - Take a raise without risk of losing benefits/assistance
- Adequate package of work supports
 - Across departments-coordinate
 - Review tax structure-look at current state tax policies for low income
- Change in knowledge, attitude, and behavior
 - Have support package that addresses all 3
- Clearinghouse/all state programs
 - Successful programs
- Is there a way for clients to know of the programs
- Support based on income beyond that time-(back and forward, support based on income history)
- Tax incentives for businesses that provide supportive services to families

*Ideas for action

- Overcome philanthropic divide
 - Discussion of starting L3C's in MT
 - Leads to increased regional foundation funds
- Get a list from MT Non-profit association
 - All programs that lead to FES
- Create an outreach office
- Updating MT Self-Sufficiency Standard
 - (estimated cost \$20-40,000 aprox 4-6months)
- Get non-federal money to match state dollars for IDA's
- Skills development program for low income/working poor non-TANF recipients
- State Earned Income Tax Credit
 - Financial and investment education at the grade school level
 - Create children's savings account?
- “Rural Sourcing”-outsourcing to rural communities
- MT tax structure for the poor
- Write off student loans for residents (don't have to pay back if stay in state)

*Vision

We envision a Montana where each family has the resources needed to achieve economic security.

*Mission

To formulate strategies for achieving economic security

To coordinate & improve public programs

To create public/private partnerships to benefit low income families

To address barriers to economic security through increased resources

*Value Statements

Adequate & equal access in a culturally appropriate, holistic, and sustainable manner

Consideration of the impact & consequences of policies

MT families live in vibrant communities that empower families to reach full potential

All stakeholders are involved in the policy process

We value risk taking and pursue innovative ideas

**Governor Brian Schweitzer
Governor's Advisory Council
on Economic Security for Montana Families
Draft-Discussion Notes 8-21-07**

A-Meeting Basic Needs (Sheila, Bethany, Rob)

- a1-Life Skills training
- a2-Health Disparity (substance abuse)
- a3-Stronger support for drug/alcohol problems
- a4-Transportation (public/private)
- a5-Self-sufficiency roadmap to living wage: basic need foundation
- a6-One stop shop to apply for services: more state coordination, resource navigation system

B-Community & Economic Development (Anna, Barb, Barb)

- b1-Health Disparity (substance abuse)
- b2-Stronger support for drug/alcohol problems
- b3-"Individualism vs. Collectivism"
- b4-Historical Trauma
- b5-Infrastructure decrease (tech...)
- b6-Industrial investment: commercial
- b7-Lack of "community" involvement
- b8-Lack of non-profits/community organizations
- b9-BIA, Tribal Gov't, Fed: no local
- b10-Community based participation key: "community up, not government down!"
- b11- "Rural Sourcing"
- b12-Empower community:
 - "community-based & owned & operated"
 - work within community values/beliefs
- b13-Incentives to community development:
 - new market tax credits
 - state tax credit: invest
 - local SB development
 - technology, IT, wind energy
- b14-Access to technology state-wide
- b15-L3C Philanthropic giving, support & refer to Governor's Council on Endowments, link this \$ with our ideas
- b16-Family friendly loans, incentives for businesses to hire TANF/Low income people

C-Education & Training (Mary, Elaine, Angie, Everall)

- c1-High dropout rate
- c2-Lack of respect: Native traditions (holidays, etc.)
- c3-Increase accessibility: training, voc, Tribal college invest
- c4-Assess "problems" with Fed initiatives (Job Corps outsourcing contracts, DBE)
- c5-Fund/establish GED program where non-existent (inc training/sec.ed)

- c6-Life Skills training
- c7-Access to technology state-wide
- c8-Promote financial literacy
- c9-OPI-Board of Public Ed: Attitudes
- c10-Consumer Education on a continual basis: early ed to adulthood
- c11-Skill acquisition
- c12-PR Campaign: low income are working, family friendly businesses (offers benefits)
- c13-Develop resources for training, apprentices, and peer-mentors
- c14-Tribal Colleges training programs, education on small business development, etc.
- c15-Utilize business clinics (ABC's) being held by Revenue, Commerce, Labor, develop a package on what is available, Insure Montana, utilize SBDC's

D-Clearinghouse & Outreach (Dick, Lori)

- d1-Geographic isolation
- d2-Promotion of resources available (cultural challenges)
- d3-Transitional aid from public assistance to self-sufficiency
- d4-Transportation (public/private)
- d5-Clearinghouse/coordination
- d6-One stop shop to apply for services: more state coordination, resource navigation system
- d7-Clearinghouse of activities that work & can be replicated: include outreach, education, and training
- d8-Utilize business clinics (ABCs) being held by Revenue, Commerce, Labor, develop a package on what is available, Insure Montana, utilize SBDC's

E-Moving Toward Economic Security (Minkie, Sheila, Shannon)

- e1-Income disparity
- e2-Financial resources
- e3-Value difference (what is wealth?)
- e4-Promote financial literacy
- e5-Tax incentives for supportive services
- e6-Pass STEITC
- e7-Transitional aid from public assistance to self-sufficiency
- e8-Eligibility/cliff
- e9-Self-sufficiency roadmap to living wage: basic need foundation
- e10-Develop state-wide IDA Program (banks)
- e11-Look at tax policies, encourage basic level of benefits, possibly using tax incentives (what are other states doing?)
- e12-Family friendly loans, incentives for businesses to hire TANF/Low income people

Ideas for Action

- Update Montana Self-Sufficiency Standard
- Limit on level of interest on pay-day loans
- Montana's tax structure for poor
- Write off student loans for people who stay
- Increase access to affordable child care
- Increase apprenticeship training funding, increase pr on this training
- Increase access to affordable health care
- Increase access to affordable housing